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(12) United States Patent
Mangla et al.**(10) Patent No.: US 6,257,401 B1**
(45) Date of Patent: Jul. 10, 2001**(54) VENTED CONTAINER WITH HANDLES AND EMBOSSMENT****(75) Inventors:** Raj K. Mangla, Pittsford, NY (US); J. Scott Dellinger, Buffalo Grove, IL (US); Mark A. Erickson, Lindenhurst, IL (US); Thomas J. Hayes, McHenry, IL (US); Suzanne R. Maslach, Pittsford, NY (US); Mark E. Spencer, Gurnee, IL (US)0 563 781 * 10/1993 (EP) .
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4 6035 * 1/1992 (JP) .**(73) Assignee:** Pactiv Corporation, Lake Forest, IL (US)**Primary Examiner**—Jim Foster**(74) Attorney, Agent, or Firm**—Jenkins & Gilchrist**(*) Notice:** Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.**(21) Appl. No.:** 09/312,244**(22) Filed:** May 14, 1999**(51) Int. Cl.⁷** B65D 81/26**(52) U.S. Cl.** 206/204; 220/754; 220/755;
220/366.1; 426/129**(58) Field of Search** 220/574, 575,
220/754, 755, 758, 608, 366.1; 206/541,
542, 549, 204; 426/124, 129**(56) References Cited****U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**Re. 28,059 * 7/1974 Mounts et al. .
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A thermoplastic container for food or other articles is set forth. The container includes a base having a bottom, a pair of opposing side walls and a pair of opposing end walls extending upwardly from the bottom. A pair of integral handle segments are formed with the outer rim of the base and rotatably attached to anchoring portions at integral hinges. The handle segments can be releasably engaged with each other and include a pair of hinged portions. Each hinged portion has at least one upwardly extending rib segment and at least one downwardly extending rib segment interconnected by integral hinges that form definite bending points for the hinged portions of the handle segments so that when the handle segments are upturned, the hinged portion assists in distributing stress and obtaining a proper balance of the container. A plurality of wells designed to retain fluid therein via capillary action or surface tension forces are formed in the bottom such that fluid does not flow out of the wells when the base is tilted or turned upside-down. A cover may be removably attached to the base to define a food storage chamber. A downwardly extending rib formed in the cover rim is intermittently provided with a plurality of cover venting notches which are aligned with respective base venting notches formed in an upwardly extending elongated rib of the base. With the cover in place atop the base, the conjunction of the base venting notches and the cover venting notches define vent openings. Another set of apertures for additional ventilation are provided in the side walls of the cover. Also, multiple containers can be stacked atop each other and the bottom includes at least one elongated recess for substantially receiving a portion of the handle segments to facilitate stacking.

76 Claims, 10 Drawing Sheets